

Appl. No. 09/997,132  
Amdt. Dated December 27, 2004  
Reply to Office Action of September 28, 2004

**• • R E M A R K S / A R G U M E N T S • •**

The present Preliminary Amendment is being filed together with a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) of the above-identified application.

By the present Preliminary Amendment, the claims have been amended to recite "pairs" of grooves which are aligned longitudinally and spaced apart longitudinally. Support for this structural recitation is found in the last full sentence on page 8 of applicants' original specification and readily seen in Figs. 1 and 3.

Also by the present Preliminary Amendment, claim 4 has been changed in the manner courteously suggested by the Examiner on page 2 of the Official Action.

Claim 12 has been added which recites further structural features of the present invention which are shown in Figs. 1 and 3.

Entry of the changes to the claims prior to continuing the examination of the application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-12 are pending in this application.

In the Official Action of September 28, 2004 the Examiner objected to claim 4 and rejected claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

It is believed that the changes made herein to the claims address and overcome the objection and rejection of claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

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In the Official Action of September 28, 2004 the Examiner rejected the claims 1-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,459,016 to Rosenfeld et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,451,442 to Pieniak et al.

In addition, claims 1-8, 10 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over European Patent Application No. 1 023 884 to Rosenfeld in view of Pieniak et al.

Neither Pieniak et al., Rosenfeld et al. '016 or Rosenfeld et al. '884 teach the structure and alignment of applicants' grooves.

Accordingly, it is submitted that the claims as now amended are neither anticipated nor obvious over the teachings of the prior art of record.

Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejection of the claims and an early allowance of the claims is believed to be in order.

It is believed that the above represents a complete response to the Official Action and reconsideration is requested.


If upon consideration of the above, the Examiner should feel that there remain outstanding issues in the present application that could be resolved; the Examiner is invited to contact applicants' patent counsel at the telephone number given below to discuss such issues.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR §1.136 is hereby made. Please charge the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of

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time fees, to Deposit Account No. 12-2136 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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